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MAYOR GIBSON URGES GOVERNOR KEAN TO SIGN BILL AUTHORIZING CAPITAL BONDS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

In a letter to Governor Thomas Kean, Mayor Kenneth A. Gibson urged the Governor to sign the recently passed A-2038, sponsored by Assemblywoman Mildred Barry Garvin (D-Essex) which would allow the Newark Board of Education to implement certain capital improvement plans that were held up by the transition of Newark from a Type I to a Type II district.

Gibson stated that A-2038, the "Authorization Process of School Bonds by Certain Districts," would "close a gap in state law, thereby enabling the Newark Board of Education to pursue its capital improvement plans if those plans were included in the bonding process prior to the Type II changeover."

Voters in the last municipal election (May 11, 1982) voted to change Newark from a Type I (appointed) to a Type II (elected) Board of Education. The result of this change is that any capital projects must be approved by the voters. Prior to the change capital projects had to first be approved by the Board of Education, then by the Board of School Estimate and finally by the Municipal Council, as the municipality issues the appropriate bonds.

Gibson noted that a problem has arisen because of the changeover "because there is no provision in the law for capital projects which were in process (already approved by one or two of the three entities) during the transition." Assemblywoman Garvin's bill would fill in the gap by allowing the process to be completed.

Among the projects which were in the process of being implemented when the changeover occurred were: the rehabilitation of Weequahic and Central High Schools, the rehabilitation of Oliver Street School, electrical work in Barringer High School, repair of the auditorium stage at Arts High School, a building addition and

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repair of the heating system in Hawkins Street School and new science labs in University High School. These projects were originally included in the 1980-81 school budget.

Stressing the importance of A-2038 to Newark, Gibson stated "the salient point here is that the City (of Newark) wishes to issue the bonds for school capital projects but cannot do so unless you sign A-2038. Then, the Council and I can proceed with the Board of Education to accomplish the steps necessary for fixing up our schools and ensuring adequate physical plants for our education community."